

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MS. GREEN

NEA/ARP - MR. DICKMAN

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 048794

R 030955Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NY

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USMISSION SINAI
CINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
APRIL 2, 1976:

Q. COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THE SECRETARY MEANT IN HIS
TESTIMONY ON THE HILL TODAY WHEN HE SAID THAT LEBANON
WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE EXPLODED WITHIN THE LAST
TWO WEEKS IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR OUR POSITIVE RELATIONS
WITH ALL THE KEY ARAB COUNTRIES? DOES THAT IMPLY A MORE
ACTIVE U.S. MEDIATING ROLE THAN HAS BEEN DISCLOSED?

A. I THINK WHAT IT REFLECTS -- I WASN'T PRESENT, BUT
FROM WHAT YOU TELL ME -- IT REFLECTS HIS JUDGMENT OF THE
EFFECT OF OUR EFFORTS WITH ALL OF THE PARTIES.

Q. DOES THAT IMPLY SYRIA PRIMARILY?

A. IT IMPLIES ALL OF THE PARTIES THAT WE HAVE BEEN
TALKING TO VERY CLOSELY.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION, BEYOND THE SECRETARY'S
GENERALITIES ON LEBANON THIS MORNING, ABOUT THE STATE OF
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AFFAIRS THERE? WHAT REPORTS HAVE COME BACK FROM OUR
EMBASSY?

A. AGAIN, I AM AT SOME DISADVANTAGE BECAUSE I DO NOT
KNOW HOW MUCH THE SECRETARY SAID. OUR INFORMATION
CERTAINLY IS THAT THE CEASEFIRE IS HOLDING.

WE WELCOME THIS DECISION BY THE LEBANESE PARTIES TO STOP THE FIGHTING, WHICH CERTAINLY HAS SHAKEN LEBANON AND CAUSED SO MUCH SENSELESS SUFFERING.

NOW, OUR EFFORTS WILL REMAIN CONCENTRATED ON ASSISTING THE PARTIES TO CONTINUE THE CEASEFIRE AND WORK OUT A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THEIR DIFFERENCES. AND WE HOPE THAT THE CEASEFIRE WILL PROVIDE THE ATMOSPHERE ESSENTIAL FOR POSITIVE CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD THAT POLITICAL SOLUTION.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER ON THE SPECIFICS OF MR. BROWN'S ACTIVITIES?

A. AMBASSADOR BROWN MET WITH PRESIDENT FRANJIYAH, FORMER PRESIDENT CAMILLE SH AMOUN, MR. PIERRE GEMAYEL YESTERDAY. I BELIEVE HE ALSO MET WITH PRIME MINISTER RASHID KARAMI, WITH THE SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT KAMAL ASAD, AND WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER SAEB SALAM. AND HE WILL CONTINUE TO MEET WITH THE VARIOUS LEBANESE LEADERS.

Q. HAVE HIS INSTRUCTIONS CHANGED IN ANY WAY SINCE YESTERDAY, WITH REGARD TO THE PALESTINIANS?

A. NO.

Q. HAS THERE BEEN ANY MOVEMENT OR ANY CONTACT ON ANY LEVEL BETWEEN AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND THE PLO OR ANY OTHER PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES?

A. NOT THAT I KNOW OF.

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Q. THE SECRETARY SAID TODAY AT THE SENATE COMMITTEE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS NOW BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ALL GROUPS IN THE LEBANESE SITUATION. AND ALL GROUPS WOULD SEEM TO IMPLY PALESTINIANS AS WELL. IS THAT THAT WAS INTENDED?

A. NO, I DO NOT BELIEVE SO. I THINK HE WAS REFERRING TO THE LEBANESE PARTIES.

Q. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT BECAUSE OF DISINTEGRATION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY THERE WAS NO FORCE LEFT THERE TO IMPLEMENT A SETTLEMENT.

A. YES.

Q. AT THE SAME TIME, HE IS SAYING HE REMAINS OPPOSED TO ANY FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION.

A. YES.

Q. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT MIGHT MEAN AN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY INTERVENTION -- UN OR SADAT OR -- HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT?

A. NO. I AM JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO SPECULATE AS TO WHAT STEPS MIGHT BE TAKEN DURING THE CEASEFIRE BY THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES TO RESTORE SOME SECURITY IN LEBANON.

Q. COULD YOU JUST DESCRIBE THE INTENSITY OF OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORT BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF MR. BROWN, AND WERE WE VERY ACTIVE IN WHAT CAPITALS?

A. I WAS ASKED THAT QUESTION BEFORE AMBASSADOR BROWN LEFT, AND WE HAD INDICATED, I THINK ON A FAIRLY REGULAR BASIS, THAT WE WERE IN VERY CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH ALL OF THE PARTIES, BOTH OUTSIDE AND INSIDE LEBANON.

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